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Office of Program Resources Management

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## USAID prepares \$80-M funding for RP projects

THE UNITED States Agency for International Development (USAID) plans to allocate as much as \$80 million for Philippine development projects this year, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) said in a statement yesterday.

The amount — involving an increase of some \$11 million from allocations for last year — is "still subject to final Washington approval," the statement read further.

NEDA and USAID representatives recently held consultations on the current and future directions of US assistance to the Philippines, it added.

Representing NEDA was Deputy Director-General Rolando G.Tungpalan, while USAID was represented by Mission Director Jon Lindborg.

KEY CHALLENGES

During the meeting, Mr. Tungpalan noted the alignment of the USAID country strategy with the current Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan.

He noted"key challenges such as infrastructure development and social payback to translate macroeconomic benefits to people on the ground."

For his part, Mr. Lindborg stressed that "our joint goal is about improving the quality of life of all Filipinos."

He cited the country's good economic performance in 2007, notably its better-than-expected growth, improving fiscal situation and investment climate, as well as planned state budgetary increases in key sectors such as education, health and infrastructure.

(Source: Business World, 2/27/08, page 6/S1)